

## Message Text

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ORIGIN SNM-02

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13

JUSE-00 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05 OES-06 OMB-01

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APPROVED BY S/NM:SBVANCE

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CIA:MR. PIPER (DRAFT)

ARA/LA:MR. BROWN (DRAFT)

DEA:MR. SMITH (SUBS)

----- 131062

R 132032Z JUL 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 173247

FOR THE CHIEF OF MISSION FROM SHELDON B. VANCE, S/NM

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS: POSSIBLE FUTURE OPIUM SOURCE  
COUNTRIES

1. AS ADDRESSEE POSTS ARE AWARE, HEROIN IS THE MOST  
SERIOUS DRUG OF ABUSE IN THE UNITED STATES AND HAS BEEN  
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THE PRIME TARGET OF OUR INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL

PROGRAM FOR MANY YEARS. FOLLOWING THE ELIMINATION OF TURKEY AS THE PRIME SOURCE OF OPIUM FOR THE PRODUCTION OF HEROIN ABUSED IN THE UNITED STATES, ILLICIT OPIUM POPPY CULTIVATION IN MEXICO EXPANDED CONSIDERABLY AND IN THE PAST FEW YEARS MEXICO HAS BEEN THE SOURCE OF MOST HEROIN SEIZED IN THE UNITED STATES. RECENT INDICATORS ARE THAT, BASED ON SEIZURES HERE, ABOUT 80 OF THE HEROIN COMING INTO THE UNITED STATES IS FROM MEXICO, WITH EAST ASIAN SOURCES (BURMA, THAILAND) PRIMARILY ACCOUNTING FOR THE REMAINDER.

2. IN LATE 1975, THE GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO VERY SIGNIFICANTLY EXPANDED ITS PROGRAM OF ERADICATION OF POPPY PLANTATIONS IN MEXICO, ALL OF WHICH ARE GROWN ILLEGALLY. A WIDER AREA WAS COVERED IN THE ERADICATION PROGRAM BUT, MOST SIGNIFICANTLY, HERBICIDES WERE EMPLOYED FOR THE FIRST TIME. ACCORDING TO OUR BEST AVAILABLE INFORMATION, ABOUT 90 OF THE POPPY PLANTS WERE DESTROYED BEFORE THE END OF AN INTENSIFIED CAMPAIGN IN MAY OF THIS YEAR. THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT HAS CONFIRMED ITS DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE A COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE POPPY ERADICATION PROGRAM, COMPLEMENTED WITH STEPPED UP INTERDICTION OF TRAFFICKING EFFORTS. WE HAVE, THEREFORE, GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE TRAFFIC OF HEROIN FROM MEXICO TO THE UNITED STATES WILL SOON BE VERY SUBSTANTIALY REDUCED.

3. WITH THE SUCCESSFUL RESULTS OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN NARCOTICS CONTROL WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN TURKEY AND MEXICO, AND WHICH ARE BEING PARALLELED TO AN IMPORTANT DEGREE IN BURMA, DRUG TRAFFICKERS MAY BEGIN TO LOOK TO OTHER COUNTRIES WHERE OPIUM POPPIES MIGHT BE CULTIVATED. THE EMBASSY IN SAN JOSE HAS REPORTED SOME POPPIES HAVE OCCASIONALLY BEEN FOUND GROWING WILD (WHICH IS RARE) IN COSTA RICA, SUGGESTING CONDITIONS THERE MIGHT BE SUITABLE FOR THEIR CULTIVATION. FOR THIS REASON WE WISH OTHER POSTS IN THE REGION TO COMMENT ON PROSPECTS FOR CULTIVATION OF OPIUM POPPIES IN THEIR HOST COUNTRIES. IS IT ILLEGAL TO GROW OPIUM POPPIES? DO SUITABLE SOIL AND CLIMATE CONDITIONS EXIST IN AREAS

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DIFFICULT TO POLICE? IS THERE ANY PAST HISTORY OF OPIUM POPPY CULTIVATION EVEN ON A SMALL SCALE? HAVE THERE BEEN ANY REPORTS OF TRAFFICKERS SEEKING OPPORTUNITIES TO START OPIUM POPPY CULTIVATION?

4. WE NOW HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT POPPY GROWING IN YOUR HOST COUNTRIES IS LIKELY TO APPEAR SUDDENLY ON A SIGNIFICANT SCALE. OUR INTEREST IS TO DETECT ANY EARLY

SIGNS SO THAT THE PROBLEM CAN BE DEALT WITH IN ITS  
INCIPIENCY RATHER THAN AFTER IT SPREADS AND REQUIRES A  
MAJOR PROGRAM. WE WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING YOUR VIEWS  
BY AUGUST 15. KISSINGER

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## Message Attributes

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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 13 JUL 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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